



# City Hall NEWS

2nd QUARTER 2023

## WATER CONTRACTS

*Ensuring our supply & expanding services*

Thanks to a partnership with Montgomery County Rural Water District #6 and Bartlett - Montgomery County, LLC, the City of Independence has entered agreements to supply water to Bartlett's new soybean processing plant under construction near the Highway 160/169 interchange. The process will involve the construction of a nine-mile pipeline connecting the Independence water plant with RWD#6's meter near the Bartlett facility. Montgomery County Rural Water District #6 will serve Bartlett as its customer.

You may have questions about how the arrangement will impact water supply and service for our community. Read on for answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about this project. ➡

*See Water FAQ's on Page 2*

YOU CAN STILL  
COMPLETE YOUR  
CITIZEN SATISFACTION  
SURVEY ONLINE BY  
JULY 4.







# Water FAQ's

Important things to know about the City's water supply agreement with Bartlett

## Q. Is there enough water for both the City of Independence and Bartlett.

**A. YES.** The City receives its water supply from the Verdigris River, which is fed, in part, by Elk City Reservoir, a man-made flood-control lake built with the intention of creating capacity for storing water for consumption by "downstream" people and businesses. Within the lake, there is a "conservation pool" of more than 37,000 acre feet/12 billion gallons of water available to supplement natural flows to downstream users and to keep the river flowing all the way south to the state line.

## Q. Even in our current drought situation...when lake levels appear to be down?

**A. YES.** The State of Kansas financed the water storage in the lake, and, therefore, sells "water marketing contracts" to major downstream users to ensure water is stored for times of need. The City of Independence entered a water contract with the State in August 2022. While the lake - like everything else in our area - has been impacted by recent drought conditions, the available water supply is sufficient to sustain users - and the lake ecosystem itself - even through more extreme weather conditions.

In fact, Kansas' most significant "Drought of Record" occurred between 1953 and 1957. Kansas Water Office predictions indicate there is less than a 2% chance of another drought of that severity in the future, based on current data. But modeling by the office has shown that, even if such an extreme drought occurred, the current water supply would be adequate to meet the demands of all downstream users.

Here's how that worst-case-scenario model translates in numbers:

**Available usage in this model:** 21 cubic feet per second / 13,000,000 gallons per day

**Actual usage today:** City of Independence - 3 to 4 cubic feet per second / 1.4 to 2.5 million gallons per day, depending on the season.

*(Plus, 1.5 to 2 cubic feet per second is returned to the river after cycling through the wastewater treatment plant.)*

## Q. If there is enough water in the lake, why did we have to conserve water in the city last year?

**A.** The City did not have water purchase contracts in place with the State of Kansas until August 2022. Even the conservation methods encouraged last year were voluntary. Now, with the water contracts in place, usage restrictions are not anticipated.

## Q. Is the City of Independence financing the water pipeline to Bartlett?

**A. YES.** The City will use bonds to fund the work over a period of five years. However, there are NO net costs to the City, as Bartlett will pay the City back for those costs. Bartlett has promised to provide a payment bond or irrevocable letter of credit to secure payments to the City.

## Q. Will this agreement increase my water rates?

**A. NO.** Since Bartlett will be providing additional revenue to the City, and we will use our current infrastructure for water treatment and handling, it is highly likely that this additional revenue will help minimize the impact of future rate increases for citizens, as capital expenditures and operating costs will be spread over a larger volume of water.

## Q. Is this a mutually beneficial arrangement?

**A. Yes, on many levels.** The City of Independence recognizes the crucial nature of recruiting and retaining businesses to improve our area economy and provide good jobs to citizens and customers to other local businesses. Bartlett will be a significant contributor to our economic fabric. The company needed water; the City could help. It's a win-win-win.

# Project Updates

## PUBLIC WORKS & INFRASTRUCTURE

### 1916 CITY HALL RENOVATION

#### Status:

Ceiling installs, final interior wiring and exterior concrete work underway. Occupancy anticipated for late August.

### STREET PROJECT, MILL & OVERLAY CHESTNUT ST.

#### 9th to Penn

#### Status:

Project bidding in progress.  
Anticipated Start: 3rd Qtr. 2023  
Finish: 4th Qtr. 2023

### CENTRAL PARK SPORTS COMPLEX

#### Status:

Rebidding Phase 1 for reduced scope. Bid deadline July 11.  
To include mass dirt work grading, seeding of soccer and baseball fields.  
Anticipated start: 3rd Qtr. 2023

### STREET PROJECT, MYRTLE ST. OVERLAY 10th to 17th

#### Status:

Project bidding in progress.  
Anticipated Start: 3rd Qtr. 2023  
Finish: 4th Qtr. 2023

### AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS

Upgrade to fuel containment systems

#### Status:

Preliminary design/layout started.  
Anticipated Start: 3rd Qtr. 2023  
Finish: 1st Qtr. 2024

### STREET PROJECT, MILL & OVERLAY MAIN STREET 2nd to 8th

#### Status:

Engineering in progress.  
Anticipated Start: 4th Qtr. 2023  
Finish: 3rd Qtr. 2024

## Building in Indy off to a robust start in 2023



Six months into 2023, the City of Independence is bustling with several significant construction projects. To date this year, the City has issued building permits valued at **\$11,626,868**.

This total reflects three major building and renovation projects:

- **Skyward Credit Union** (pictured left) is constructing a new facility near the edge of town at 3159 W. Main with a valuation of \$3 million.
- **USD 446** is constructing a new preschool facility at 514 N. 11th, valued at \$3.3 million.
- **Garden Walk Apartments** at 1701 N. 10th is undertaking a major remodel with a valuation of more than \$3.4 million.





## New tech, ordinance and scheduling in place to help

As a key initiative in our strategic plan and an important contributor to citizen, visitor and new-resident satisfaction, the City remains keenly focused on beautification efforts across the community. At a community meeting hosted by the City in March, more than 80 residents turned out to share their concerns and ideas related to beautification in Independence. Since then, several new initiatives have been implemented to further support this effort.

## Continued strides toward beautification

### 1. See-Click-Fix online service request



The City's online "See-Click-Fix" application allows any resident, regardless of where you live, to conveniently report a problem and track our progress in addressing it. By scanning the QR code above or visiting the City's website at:

**[www.independenceks.gov](http://www.independenceks.gov)** and clicking the **Citizen Service Request** button on the home page, you can report everything from a pothole to a water leak to excessive trash, junk or tall grass in a neighborhood. The system allows you to remain anonymous, if you choose; to receive email updates or additional questions from the City; and to track the progress of repairs or remediation of the issue using an interactive map.

### 2. New City Ordinance more teeth in code enforcement

At its May 25 meeting, the Independence City Commission adopted an updated **Environmental Code** that established new guidelines for enforcement for violations, including excessive trash, junk, debris, abandoned vehicles, overgrown vegetation and unsafe/dilapidated structures. The updated ordinance provides for steeper penalties for habitual violators or those who do not respond to official warnings from the City Code Inspector. Under the new ordinance, violations can result in immediate citation to court and a \$250 fine upon the first offense; \$500 on the second offense; and up to \$1,000 for a third offense. You may visit the City's website to read the full ordinance: <http://www.independenceks.gov/158/City-Code>.



### 3. More Open Hours

To improve resident access to important cleanup resources in the community, the City has updated its schedule for recycling, bulky item drop-off and brush disposal. The following new schedule will take effect July 1, 2023:

- **BULKY ITEM DROP-OFF**  
(City Sanitation Yard, 21st & Maple)  
Thurs & Fri: 8 am-Noon  
1st Saturday of the Month: 8 am-Noon
- **RECYCLING** (Sanitation Yard)  
Every Thursday: 11 am-1 pm  
1st Saturday of the Month: 8 am-Noon
- **BRUSH & LIMB DROP-OFF**  
(City Brush Yard, 1/2 mile south of College Ave. on CR 4100)  
Every Thurs, Fri and Sat: 8 a.m.-Noon





**PARK HOURS: 7 a.m.-11:59 p.m.**  
**ZOO HOURS: 9 a.m.-7 p.m.**



**Left**, two-toed sloth Randi Rae arrived at the zoo in May. **Center**, the zoo's new female brown-headed spider monkey is right at home in her new hangout, and, **above**, the new male spider monkey and, Lukie, the zoo's existing long-haired spider monkey, have become fast friends. **Below**, FORPAZ, park and City reps cut the ribbon on the new Musical Sensory Garden play structure.

# S-L-O-T-H, SPIDER MONKEYS, Sensory Garden



## Summer time and the livin' is fun and easy at the park & zoo

New animals and play equipment are shakin' things up for an exceptional family experience this summer at Riverside Park and Ralph Mitchell Zoo.

In April, the zoo welcomed two brown-headed spider monkeys to the family - a 4-year-old male from Virginia Safari Park in Natural Bridge, Virginia, and 2-year-old female from Gulf Breeze Zoo in Gulf Breeze, Florida. So far unnamed, the monkeys have successfully been introduced to the zoo's long-haired spider monkey, Lukie, and all three are on exhibit together.

In May, a 9-year-old female Linne's two-toed sloth joined the zoo, hailing from Camel Safari Las Vegas. Named Randi Rae, she is routinely housed in the former kinkajou exhibit of the Steven's Building but may also be seen outside with the mallard

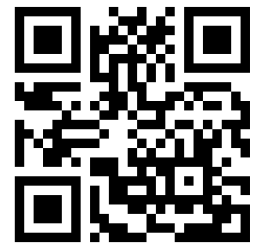
duck (Scrooge McDuck) when temperatures are above 75 degrees. The acquisitions of the sloth and monkeys were made possible by the FORPAZ (Friends of Riverside Park and Zoo) fundraising organization.

In addition to new animals this spring, with the help of community donors, FORPAZ also purchased a Musical Sensory Garden play structure for the Riverside Park playground. The structure is accessible by ADA sidewalks and plays lively music to be enjoyed by all at the playground.

In its annual Zoo Brew event June 2, FORPAZ also raised several thousand dollars to further support the renovation of the park's 1050 locomotive.



# *If your internet is slower than the zoo's new sloth, read this!*



The City's Economic Development Advisory Board has been working with internet providers and the State of Kansas on opportunities to improve local broadband services. Last year, the City partnered with other area cities and Montgomery County to apply for a grant to support improved broadband infrastructure. Our request was denied because our area was considered "served" by Federal standards. If you regularly experience sluggish internet service or no service at all when you try to connect, you may beg to differ with that assessment that we are indeed "served."

Even though our original grant request was denied, you can help us be more successful with future attempts by taking a broadband survey at [BroadbandKS.com](http://BroadbandKS.com) (or scan the code provided here). You can take the survey from BOTH your home and office computers, and we recommend completing the survey in the late afternoon or early evening, when usage is at its daily peak, as part of the survey process will include a test of your internet speed. This will give the state a clear picture of our current broadband coverage and challenges.

## SUMMER FLOOD SAFETY TIPS

*Nearly every day, flooding happens somewhere in the United States. Knowing what to do during a flood will increase your safety and chances of survival if it happens in your area.*

### **KNOW YOUR RISK**

Do some checking and see if you live in a floodplain. Contact the City of Independence at (620) 332-2528 or visit the City's website to access the flood map:

<http://www.independenceks.gov/351/Floodplain-Management>

If you live in a floodplain, consider flood insurance. Make an itemized list of your property, and photograph or video the interior and exterior of your home.

### **WHEN A FLOOD THREATENS**

Obtain local information from the Independence Emergency Alert System, City website, local radio and news networks.

### **DURING A FLOOD**

Avoid areas subject to sudden flooding, and move to higher ground. Do not attempt to drive over a flooded road. STOP! Turn around and don't drown. Six inches of water can stall your vehicle; 12 inches will float many vehicles; and 24 inches will carry your vehicle away. Keep children from playing in floodwaters, near culverts or storm drains.

### **AFTER A FLOOD**

Use flashlights - not lanterns or torches - to examine buildings. Do not handle live electrical equipment in wet areas. Seek necessary medical care at the nearest hospital. Food, clothing and shelter will be made available for those displaced by the flood water.

### **FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT**

Any building activity in the floodplain requires permitting before work is started. Please contact the City of Independence Building Department at (620) 332-2528 or [davidc@independenceks.gov](mailto:davidc@independenceks.gov) before building. Building activity includes fencing, storage buildings, landscaping or additions and remodeling of buildings in the floodplain.





# We're Hiring!



## It takes a great team to run a great city!

We offer:

- Competitive pay
- Excellent benefits
- KPERS retirement program
- Flexible scheduling
- Supportive environment
- Meaningful work!



Watch our IPD video and hear firsthand what it's like to be part of our team.



## We are currently recruiting for:

- Patrol Officer I
- Dispatcher/Clerk I
- Mobile Intensive Care Technician/Firefighter I (Paramedic)
- Public Service Worker II/Medium Machinery Operator
- Public Service Worker I - Street Department
- Public Service Worker I - Sanitation Department
- Public Service Worker I - Water/Sewer Department
- Part-time Park/Cemetery Maintenance
- Seasonal Park Ride Operators, Concessions and Ticket Sellers
- Seasonal Cemetery Mowing/Maintenance

Scan the QR code at the top of the page or use this link to see full job descriptions and apply online:

<http://independenceks.gov/jobs.aspx>

Applications also accepted at:  
KansasWorks, 317 N. Penn  
620.332.5904

[www.southeastkansasworks.com](http://www.southeastkansasworks.com)



City of Independence  
811 W. Laurel  
Independence, KS 67301



*There's still time to donate!*

# Calendar

**JULY 1, AUGUST 5,  
SEPTEMBER 2**

**MONTHLY RECYCLING**

8 a.m.-12 noon  
@ City Sanitation Yard,  
21st & Maple  
*\*Also available every  
Thursday 11 a.m.-1 p.m.*

**Every Thursday,  
Friday & 1st Saturday  
of the Month**

**BULKY ITEM DROPOFF**

8 a.m.-12 noon  
@ City Sanitation Yard

**Every Thursday,  
Friday & Saturday**

**BRUSH YARD OPEN**

8 a.m.-12 noon  
1/2 mile south of  
College Ave. on CR 4100  
Brush & leaves only.  
No lumber.

**JULY 4  
INDEPENDENCE DAY  
CELEBRATION**

@ RIVERSIDE PARK  
Mid-Continent Band  
Concert, Park Rides &  
Mini-Golf, Fireworks Show  
*(No fireworks allowed in  
park and zoo)*

**JULY 4 & SEPT. 4**

**CITY HALL CLOSED FOR  
HOLIDAYS & TRASH  
ROUTES SHIFTED  
FORWARD ONE DAY**

**JULY 7, AUGUST 4,  
SEPTEMBER 1**

**FIRST FRIDAY**

7:30 a.m.  
@ Independence Civic  
Center & Facebook Live

**JULY 13 & 27,  
AUGUST 10 & 24,  
SEPTEMBER 14 & 28**

**CITY COMMISSION  
MEETINGS**

5:30 p.m.  
@ Independence  
Civic Center